

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PE

SUBJECT: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY. PRESSURE ON MORALES BERMUDEZ FROM NAVE AND ITS ALLIES AND SUPPORTERS TO MODERATE LEFEWARD MOVEMENT OF GOP MAY HAVE BEEN AT LEAST TEMPORARILY SUCCESSFUL. LABOR AND GENERAL ECONOMIC SITUATIONS REMAIN SERIOUS, HOWEVER. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY BELIEVES NAVY WITH POSSIBLE SUPPORT OF CERTAIN KEY ARMY OFFICERS KEPT UP PRESSURE ON MAROALES BERMUDEZ OVER THE WEEKEND TO ARREST LEFTWARD MOVEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT. A KNOWLEDGEABLE ACCION POPULAR SOURCE TOLD EMBOFF MARCH 13 THAT NAVY OFFICERS WERE MEETING SATURDAY TO DECIDE NEXT STEPS IN EFFORT TO FORCE MODIFICATION AND MODERATION IN GOP POLICIES. SOURCE SAID THAT ADMIRAL CARVAJAL, WHO IS CONSIDERED A PRIME MOVER IN NAVY OPPOSITION TO LEFEWARD DRIFT, TOLD HIM NAVY HAD PRESENTED DEMANDS TO PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ AND CONFRONTED THE PRESIDENT AGAIN MARCH 15 WITH ULTIMATUM THAT HE MODERATE POLICY OR FACE NAVY WITHDRAWAL FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ARMED FORCES. NAVY APPROACH IS SUPPORTED BY KEY ARMY, AIR FORCE AND POSSIBLY SOME POLICE OFFICERS, ACCORDING TO AP SOURCE.

2. ON MARCH 15 AN AIDE TO PRIME MINISTER FERNANDEZ MALDONADO
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CALLED EMBOFF TO MAINTAIN THAT ALL WAS TRANQUIL IN POLITICAL SCENE

AND THAT MOREALES BERMUDEZ WOULD BE PRESIDENT FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE. OFFICIAL DUSCUSSED THE POLITICAL "PALN TUPAC AMARU" AND DECLARED THAT IT WOULD PROBABLY BE PRESENTED TO THE PUBLIC DURING LATE MARCH RIP OF MORALES BERMUDEZ TO TRUJILLO. OFFICIAL TERMED PLAN "MORE RADICAL" THAN "PALN INCA" AND SAID THAT CERTAIN PORTIONS SUCH AS THE POLITICAL SECTION WHICH DISCARDS THE CONCEPT OF REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY AND ABOLISHES THE CONGRESS WOULD BE "CONTROVERSIAL". HE ALLEGED THAT MORALES BERMUDEZ WAS PERSONALLY IDENTIFIED WITH THE POLITICAL PLAN AND THAT NAVY MINISTER PARODI HAD GIVEN HIS APPROVAL, THUS BINDING HIM TO IT. CABINET DID NOT DEBATE PLAN AND WAS ONLY ASKED FOR ITS OVERALL BLESSING. MODIFICATIONS BASED ON SUGGESTIONS FROM SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS COULD OCCUR, ACCORDING TO SOURCE, BUT THE JUNTA WOULD BE THE FINAL ARBITER OF ANY CHANGE. COMMENT: WE DOUBT MUCH OF AIDE'S STORY, PARTICULARLY THAT PARODI APPROVED PLAN TUPAC AMARU. POSSIBLY NEARER THE TRUTH IS APRA SOURCE'S JUDGMENT THAT PLAN WILL BE GREATLY MODIFIED OR SHELVED, AND THAT FERNANDEZ MALDONADO AND THE FAR LEFTISTS WILL BE HURT OR DISCREDITED BY ITS HAVING BEEN MADE PUBLIC. END COMMENT.

3. AS BEHIND-THE-SCENES POLITICAL MANEUVERS APPARENTLY CONTINUE, THE REGIME WAS CONFRONTED WITH DISTURBING LABOR DEVELOPMENTS. ON MARCH 13 THERE WAS A VIOLENT CLASH BETWEEN POLICE AND STRIKING FACTORY WORKERS WHO WERE BLOCKING MAJOR HIGHWAY EAST OF LIMA. DAO WAS TOLD BY RETIRED AIR FORCE GENERAL CLOSE TO LABOR MINISTER THAT TWO POLICEMEN THREE OR FOUR WORKERS AND THREE OTHER CIVILIANS WERE KILLED IN INCIDENT. OFFICERS OF THREE FRIENDLY EMBASSIES ALSO RELATED SIMILAR VERSIONS OF THIS STORY TO ANOTHER EMBASSY AT DINNER MARCH 15. IN ANOTHER LABOR DEVELOPMENT WITH POTENTIALLY IMPORTANT POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES, ANCHOVETA FISHERMEN AFFILIATED TO GOVERNMENT CTRP UNION REFUSED TO GO TO SEA MARCH 14. UNION IS FIGHTING FOR JOB STABILITY IN THE FACE OF POSSIBLE DISMISSAL OF UP TO ONE-THIRD OF ANCHOVETA LABOR FORCE. GOP TERMED THIS LABOR ACTION A GRAVE BLOW TO THE ECONOMY AND IMPORED FISHERMEN TO RETURN TO WORK.

4. MARCH 14 PRESS REPORTED THAT GOP HAD REFUSED EXIT PERMITS TO LEADERS OF TEACHERS' UNION (SUTEP) IN WHAT APPEARS TO BE A STEP PRELIMINARY TO THEIR ARREST FOR "MISUSE" OF BOTH UNION AND TEACHER COOPERATIVE FUNDS. FINALLY, UNION LEADERS IMPROSONED IN DECEMBER FOR "LABOR AGITATION" JOINED TWO FAR LEFT MINE

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UNION LEADERS IN A HUNGER STRIKE TO PROTEST THEIR ARREST AND DETENTION.

5. IN WHAT MAY PRESAGE TOUGHER GOP ACTION AGAINST WHAT IT CONSIDERS AGITATORS, SINAMOS CHIEF GENERAL VELARDE WARNED AGITATORS OF LEFT AND RIGHT THAT THEY ARE "PLAYING WITH FIRE". VELARDE DECLARED OVER WEEKEND THAT INTENT OF BOTH GROUPS IS TO SEIZE POWER.

6. COMMENT: PRESSURE EXERTED BY NAVY AND ITS POLITICAL ALLIES
IN OTHER SERVICES AND AMONG CIVILIANS MAY BE FORCING CHANGES
WHICH WOULD DECREASE POSSIBILITY OF AN EARLY COUP ATTEMPT. ABRUPT
REMOVAL OF "SECTORIZED" NEWSPAPER DIRECTORS MARCH 15 (SEPTTEL)
MAY ALSO LESSEN PRESSURE FROM RIGHT FOR A SHOWDOWN. THOUGH SPEECH
OF SINAMOS CHIEF VELARDE AND CLOSURE OF BORDER TO SUTEP LEADERS
MAY ALOS PRESAGE TOUGHER ACTION AGAINST "LABOR AGITATORS".
YET A REFUSAL OF ANCHOVY FISHERMEN TO GO TO SEA AND VIOLENCE AT
A STRUCK FACTORY INDICATE THAT LABOR PROBLEMS ARE INTRACTABLE
IN THE SHORT RUN. THE SITUATION REMAINS UNSETTLED
AND THE MORALES BERMUDEZ REGIME REMAINS IN DIFFICULTIES.
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